

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-13. (cancelled)

14. (new) Installation for venting waste gases of an air distillation or liquefaction process, which comprises:

a water-nitrogen tower having an upper discharge chamber;

a waste gas discharge stack emerging in the atmosphere and suitable for discharging oxygen at least intermittently; and

means for reducing the level of oxygen concentration in gases discharged by the stack by mixing an inert gas, miscible with oxygen and of lower density than oxygen under the same temperature and pressure conditions with the gases discharged.

15. (new) The installation according to claim 14, further comprising connecting means for fluidly connecting the respective internal spaces of the discharge chamber and of the stack in order to transfer at least some of the inert gas into the stack so that the inert gas is mixed with at least the oxygen in the stack, and thus the level of oxygen concentration of the gases discharged by the stack is reduced.

16. (new) The installation according to claim 14, wherein the inert gas is nitrogen, argon, air or a mixture of these gases.

17. (new) The installation according to claim 15, wherein the water-nitrogen tower is positioned alongside the stack, and the internal spaces in the discharge chamber and the stack are separated by a partition having as the connecting means, an outlet for discharging into the stack wet nitrogen contained in the discharge chamber.

18. (new) The installation according to claim 14, wherein the stack is equipped internally with a set of nozzles through which some or all of the gas introduced into the base of the stack flows.

19. (new) The installation according to claim 15, wherein the connecting means comprise a discharge outlet provided in a partition separating the internal spaces of the discharge chamber and of the stack; and the stack is equipped internally with a set of nozzles having a top which is located at a level below the top of the discharge outlet.

20. (new) The installation according to claim 14, wherein the water-nitrogen tower has, near its base, a dry nitrogen feed pipe; in its upper part, an inlet pipe for feeding hot water to be cooled; and positioned above the inlet pipe, a wet nitrogen discharge outlet opening into the stack.

21. (new) The installation according to claim 14, wherein the stack includes, near its base, at least one of an air feed pipe, a nitrogen feed pipe, an oxygen feed pipe, and a pipe for feeding another gas coming from the distillation.